



(Concluded from *The Children's Tribune* of September 21)

MISS CRONIN, Miss Orme, Mr. Meyers, the janitor; James Wright and George Tocher stood in the little room facing the principal and Slick. "I have sent for you," said Mr. Wood, "to express my congratulations, Miss Cronin and Miss Orme, for your splendid showing in passing so many boys; Mr. Meyer for the honor your son has done the school in receiving the highest mark, 100 per cent; James Wright and George Tocher for the next highest, 99." He paused, eyeing them closely, expecting to see some sign of guilt upon their faces, but he saw instead expressions of delighted surprise.

When they had gone Mr. Wood turned to Slick. "Well, I'll admit I'm wrong. I've never seen five more innocent looking people in my life," he said. Slick agreed

with him. "That's because they are innocent," he said. "Then, who took the paper?" Mr. Wood inquired. "No body took the paper," said Slick. "Miss Orme and Miss Cronin deserve your words of praise for their efforts in spurring on their classes to outdo each other. Mr. Meyer's boy is a model student and won his 100 per cent fairly. James Wright and George Tocher are mischievous, not bad, and mischievous boys are usually bright ones; that's why they got their 99 mark."

Mr. Wood nodded, but still showed surprise. "But the paper?" Slick opened the drawer and placed it on the top of the desk. "If you'll get under here," he said, "you'll see it wedged in the catchlock at the back of the drawer, where it caught when you first opened it. It's been there all the time."

Slick Story No. Four—"Sour Grapes"

"FRANK! The grapes will soon be ripe enough to pick. I'll want you and your father to help me some day this week." Frank smiled in anticipation of the jam and jelly to come and said, "Very well, mother, you can count on me."

Frank, or Slick, as we know him, lived in a little detached house, with an ample yard at the rear, which gave room for a small vegetable patch in which the beans, peas and tomatoes that fed the Forrester family were raised. And it was one of Slick's duties to help his dad fight such enemies as blight, bug or weed.

At the back of the garden, on a trellis that ran from fence to fence, grew as fine a grapevine as was to be found in the whole countryside. They were carefully watched throughout the season by Slick and his father, for these two lived as entirely on grape preserves as they could and were ready to give their lives, if needs must, that nothing befall their winter luxury. Mrs. Forrester, proud of her ability as a preserver and delighted to add to the comfort and pleasure of her husband and son, watched also with a jealous eye. And now the time, as well as the fruit, was almost ripe.

To be sure, it was no easy task standing over a hot

fire, for she was a frail little woman, and the ordeal usually left her a physical wreck for two or three days. However, no one could make such grape jelly as she, and as it pleased those she loved, she was glad to make the sacrifice.

Neighorly Threats

Now, the Forresters' vines were the source of envy to all the immediate neighborhood. Mrs. Anderson, the neighbor on her right, had always openly cast green eyes at the purple fruit, and only a few days before had told Mrs. Forrester that there wasn't any temptation in her life so hard to resist. "It's all I can do not to steal them," she said.

Mrs. Johnson, the neighbor on her left, told her that some one would steal them, and hinted who the some one might be.

Mrs. Robinson, the neighbor across the road, told her that she'd be willing to serve a year in jail if she could take those grapes to jail with her, and Mrs. Henderson, the neighbor at her rear, said her husband would rather have them than a bank account.

So you see it was with some cause for worry that